

BRAVE SHERIFF SAVES PRISONER

His Coolness Averts a Lynching at Rockaway, N. J., and This Is Followed by a Wild Ride to Avoid Mob.

MURDERER HAD SHOT GIRL FROM AMBUSH.

Neighbors, Led by Father of Victim, Reach Assassin and Try to Strangle Him, but Are Driven Off by Deputy.

MORRISTOWN, N. J., Dec. 7.—The experiences of Sheriff in wild communities in the West, where jails are stormed by mobs and murderers are taken by force from the officers of the law, have been duplicated by Sheriff Ryerson and Deputy Sheriff Dobbins, of this county. For they fought off a mob that was bent upon lynching Frank Betts, of Hibernia, a miner who killed Minnie Root, twelve years old, while trying to shoot Daniel Root, her father.

After a wild ride over the mountains last night, pursued by armed miners, Sheriff Ryerson landed his prisoner in jail here. Betts is in bad shape. The father of the murdered child succeeded in getting to him in the little look-up at Rockaway yesterday and almost choked him to death.

Betts's crime was so cruel and unprovoked that the entire country side was aroused when the news of it spread. A mob surrounded the jail at Rockaway. In the van of the mob was Root, armed with a double-barreled shotgun. Deputy Sheriff Dobbins stood off the crowd until Sheriff Ryerson arrived from this city. The Sheriff made a speech from the steps of the look-up and finally convinced the crowd that he would defend the prisoner with his life if need be.

Father Tried to Strangle Him. Root and two others, after giving up their arms, were admitted to the jail to identify the prisoner. Root made a jump for Betts. It took four men to drag him off.

Sheriff Ryerson became convinced last night that if he left Betts in the Rockaway look-up there would be a lynching. He got a good horse and a strong wagon and arranged to have the right way to the rear entrance to the jail. In the mean time he caused the report to be spread that he would take Betts to Morristown by train, and to add color to the report Dobbins went to the station and bought three tickets.

Everybody in the community flocked to the station, and while the village was deserted the Sheriff started with his prisoner. But sharp eyes were watching, and before he had proceeded a mile armed miners were after him on horseback and in buggies.

His knowledge of the country was all that saved the life of his prisoner. He dodged through unfrequented roads, doubled on his tracks and, although he was shot at several times by wandering parties, he succeeded finally in losing his pursuers. Half an hour after he had his prisoner safe in jail a mob arrived from Hibernia, but, realizing that there could be nothing done, the leaders or-

LITTLE MINNIE ROOT AND FRANK BETSA, WHO SHOT HER THROUGH WINDOW OF HOME.



dered the vengeance seekers to ride back.

Little Annie Root was a victim of fate. Her steps were guided into the path of Betts, just in time to save the lives of five others. She was the survivor of a family of six children and the idol of her father and mother.

Root, Betts and John Koseska were employed at the big steel mill at Hibernia. Koseska and Root lived in adjoining houses. Betts boarded with Koseska. Up to Saturday afternoon Betts had been regarded as an inoffensive if somewhat morose man.

Warned They Were to Die.

He got drunk Saturday evening and went to the home of Koseska, who was sitting at the dinner table with his wife and three children. Betts pulled short stub of candle from his pocket, lighted it, placed it on the table and took a seat in a corner of the room, the Koseskas watching him in wonder. "When that candle burns out," announced Betts calmly, "you, John Koseska and your wife Mary and your three children shall die."

With that he drew a huge dirk knife and a revolver. He warned the little family to keep still and sat watching them with glittering eyes. The candle spluttered and burned slowly. Koseska, paralyzed with fear, was unable to move.

The flame of the candles was almost licking the table when there was a knock at the door and Daniel Root, his wife and little Minnie walked in. Betts with an oath put his dirk and his pistol in his pocket and slouched out of the house. The Roots seated themselves on a lounge by the window and were listening to the breathless story of the Koseskas, when Betts fired a shot through the window. The bullet struck Minnie Root in the head. The sound of the shot brought out the neigh-

bors, and Betts was seen running away.

The neighborhood was aroused at once, and angry miners took the trail in pursuit of Betts. He started over the mountains toward Rockaway, and Deputy Sheriff Dobbins, who lives there, was warned of his approach by telephone and also that a mob was after him. Dobbins went out to meet Betts, and finally saw him running toward the village. He called upon him to halt and the reply was a shot from Betts's revolver. Dobbins answered the shot, but his aim was uncertain in the gathering dusk, and he missed. Betts had mean time emptied his revolver and had no more ammunition. Dobbins made him a prisoner and hurried him to the town hall.

Scarcely had they arrived when the mob surrounded the hall and demanded the prisoner. Dobbins pleaded with them until the arrival of Sheriff Ryerson, who had driven across from Morristown.

Ryerson ordered the mob away, but they demanded the prisoner and threatened to shoot unless he was turned over to them. "The law says I must protect the prisoner, and I will do it," said Ryerson. "Some of you will die if you attempt to storm this jail. The man will pay for his crime, but at the hands of the law."

Ryerson finally called Daniel Root, the father of the girl, and who was leading the mob, and two others to come into the jail and identify the prisoner. The rest of the crowd then turned away.

Root and the other two were taken to the cell where Betts was cowering in a dark corner. No sooner was the door opened than Root sprang upon the prisoner and attempted to choke him to death. He was finally torn away by Ryerson and Dobbins.

Root pleaded to be allowed to remain

in the cell with the prisoner. "He has killed my little girl, the last of six, and he deserves to die like a dog. Leave me alone with him and justice will be satisfied," he pleaded. Sheriff Ryerson finally removed Root and induced him to go home and see the little one who was dying. After daring death a dozen times in the darkness, Ryerson and the prisoner arrived here, their horses spent and the buggy almost a wreck. Minnie Root died a few hours after the shooting, the bullet having lodged at the back of her head.

AGAINST OVERHEAD TROLLEY

West Street Property Owners to Make Public Protest.

There will be a meeting held at the rooms of the Merchants' Association, No. 36 Broadway, to-morrow, at 2 P. M., for the purpose of organizing a committee to appear at a public hearing to oppose the application of the Interurban Street Railway Company to change its motive power on the lines on West street.

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